

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 17-18 with the following amended paragraph:

The inventions described above with respect to caps used on beverages such as milk are also applicable to other bottle cap and neck configurations. For example, a color-coded shrink sleeve can be applied to 5-gallon containers (and containers other capacities having similar neck profiles) in the bottled water industry. The cap 50 in Figures 14-16 is an example of a valved cap of the kind commonly used on 5-gallon water bottles. Such bottles are typically made of clear polycarbonate or clear PET plastic (by an injection stretch blow-molding process) and are intended to be re-filled and re-used by water bottling companies. The cap 50 has a skirt 54 and an inner cap 62. A bead 58 provides the cap with an enlarged OD (outside diameter) at one end (the lower end in Figs. 14-16). The bead corresponds to a rounded annular upper portion 70 (Fig. 16) of the bottle (not shown) 52 to which the cap is applied. While the cap shown in Figs. 14-16 is a valved cap with a protective label 60, the closure and color-coded systems of inventions described herein are also applicable to unvalved (or standard) 5-gallon closures, which do not have an inner cap 62, but may have a label 60. Also common on closures of the kind used for 5-gallon and other large capacity bottles is the inclusion of a pull tab (not shown) to facilitate the removal of the cap when it is time to clean and refill the bottle upon return of the bottle to the bottling plant, although some bottlers have automatic cap removing machines or devices which do not rely on a pull tab.

Please replace the first full paragraph on page 18 with the following amended paragraph:

As shown in Figures 14-16, a shrink sleeve 56 (about 44 mm in axial length) is applied to a cap 50 in phases. The first phase, shown in Figure 14, entails the initial application of an un-shrunk sleeve 56a. In Figure 14, a completely un-shrink 56a about to be placed over the cap 50 in the direction of the arrow 57. This may be a step that is performed by a cap manufacturer before the cap is applied to any bottle. If the cap maker applies the shrink sleeve in advance of the cap being applied to a bottle, the cap maker will preferably only partially shrink the sleeve such that there will be a gap 59 between the partially shrunk sleeve 56b and the skirt 54 of the cap 50. The gap 59 will allow radially outward flexing of the skirt of the cap as it is forced onto the top of a bottle without splitting the shrink sleeve. However, the partial shrinking of the sleeve will provide sufficient retention of the sleeve 56b on the cap 50 52 so that it may be handled, shipped and fed into a capping apparatus at the bottling facility.

Please replace the second full paragraph on page 18 with the following amended paragraph:

Figure 15 shows the partially shrunk sleeve 56b and the gap 59 around the skirt of the cap. In Figure 15 the retention of the sleeve 56b on the cap 50 52 is provided by engagement of partially shrunk areas 66 and 68 with the bead 58 on the cap 50 52.

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 18 and 19 with the following amended paragraph (second amendment of this paragraph):

If the combination of a partially shrunk sleeve 56b and a cap 50 ~~52~~, of the kind shown in Figure 15, is provided to a bottler by a cap maker, the bottler will preferably want to complete the shrinking of the sleeve 56b. The step of completing the shrinking of the sleeve to the condition shown in Figure 16 will be done by the bottler after the cap has been put onto the container ~~52~~. As can be seen in Figure 16, the fully shrunk sleeve 56c grips and is in substantial contact with the exterior of the skirt 54, and the ends of the sleeve 56c cover the peripheral edge of the label 60. As such, the fully shrunk sleeve 56c, together with the label 60, substantially cover exterior portions of the cap 50.